

REMARKS

The Office Action dated April 23, 2007 has been received and carefully noted. The above amendments and the following remarks are being submitted as a full and complete response thereto.

Claims 1-3, 5-7, and 9 are rejected, and claims 4 and 8 are objected to. Claims 1 and 3-9 have been amended, claim 2 has been cancelled, and new claims 10 and 11 have been added. Accordingly, claims 1 and 3-11 are pending in this application. Support for the amendments may be found in the specification and claims as originally filed. In particular, support for the amendment to claim 1 may be found in claim 2, as originally filed, and in the specification at page 15, lines 1-20. Support for new claims 10 and 11 may be found in the specification at page 17, line 24 – page 18, line 16. Claims 1-9 have been amended to remove drawing reference numerals. Thus, Applicant believes that no new matter is added. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of all rejections.

Objections

In the Office Action, claim 9 was objected to because “he” at the beginning of the claim should have read “The”. In this response, claim 9 has been amended to recite “The”. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this objection.

Allowable Subject Matter and Reasons for Allowance

Applicant appreciates Examiner's indication that claims 4 and 8 were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in

independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In addition, in her statement for reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter, the Examiner stated that the “prior art of record does not disclose a humidity indicator comprising a flat second air layer formed between said second film and the back of said humidity-determining plate so that at least a region or regions of said back corresponding to said humidity-determining face or faces face to the second air layer in combination with the remaining limitations of the claims.”

However, Applicant submits that the prior art of record does not disclose any second air layer, regardless of shape. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 4 and 8 are allowable over the prior art of record.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-3, 6 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Churchouse et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,310,525), (“Churchouse”) in view of Williams (U.S. Patent No. 5,224,373) (“Williams”). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Independent claim 1, as amended, recites:

“A humidity indicator...characterized in that said humidity indicator further includes a first film covering the surface of said humidity-determining plate, and a second film covering the back of said humidity-determining plate...said first and second films are formed to protrude from an outer peripheral edge of said humidity-determining plate **and bonded at outer peripheral edge portions thereof directly to each other; and said first and second films are bonded in a compression manner to a portion of said humidity-determining plate surrounding a region corresponding to said air layer**” (emphasis added).

Independent claim 6, as amended, recites:

"A humidity indicator...characterized in that said humidity indicator further includes a first film covering the surface of said humidity-determining plate and forming the surface of said humidity indicator, and a second film covering the back of said humidity-determining plate and forming the back of said humidity indicator...said first and second films are formed to protrude from an outer peripheral edge of said humidity-determining plate **and bonded at outer peripheral edge portions thereof directly to each other; and said first and second films are bonded in a compression manner to a portion of said humidity-determining plate surrounding a region corresponding to said air layer**" (emphasis added).

Applicant respectfully submits that the primary reference Churchouse does not teach or suggest all the features of claims 1 and 6. Specifically, Churchouse does not teach or suggest a humidity indicator that has first and second films that are formed to protrude from an outer peripheral edge of said humidity-determining plate and are bonded at outer peripheral edge portions thereof directly to each other where the first and second films are bonded in a compression manner to a portion of the humidity-determining plate surrounding a region corresponding to the air layer, as recited in independent claims 1 and 6. Because the first and second films are bonded in a compression manner to a portion of the humidity-determining plate surrounding a region corresponding to the air layer, it is possible to minimize the diffusion of the dust generated from the base paper sheet to the outside. Preventing the diffusion of dust generated from the base paper sheet is very important. The amount of dust generated from the base paper sheet and diffused outside varies greatly depending on whether or not the base paper sheet is covered by the film. When the base paper sheet is covered by a film, the generation of dust diffused outside can almost be prevented.

As shown in Figure 8, Churchouse teaches that the flexible sheets 10 and 12 are not bonded to each other at the outer peripheral edge portion at the top of the container at the entry aperture 20. Instead, the entry aperture 20 extends through flexible sheet 10 and gives access to one end of the detection layer 60. See col. 7, lines 28-37 and col. 5, lines 65-67. The bonding of the periphery portion of the detection layer 60 to the upper flexible sheet 10 would not be possible in Churchouse's container because the aperture 20 is necessary to provide access to the detection layer 60.

Further, secondary reference Williams does not cure the defects of primary reference Churchouse. Specifically, it does not teach or suggest a humidity indicator that has first and second films that are formed to protrude from an outer peripheral edge of said humidity-determining plate and are bonded at outer peripheral edge portions thereof directly to each other, as recited in independent claims 1 and 6. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1 and 6 are not obvious over the proposed combination of Churchouse and Williams.

Claim 2 has been cancelled, rendering its rejection moot. Claims 3 and 7 are dependent on independent claims 1 and 6, respectively, and therefore include all of their limitations. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 3 and 7 are not obvious over Churchouse and Williams.

For at least the above reasons, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-3, 6 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Churchouse in view of Williams.

Claims 5 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Churchouse and Williams as applied to claims 1-3, 6, and 7 above, and further in view of Dick et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,698,378) ("Dick"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

As discussed above, the proposed combination of Churchouse and Williams fails to teach or suggest all of the features of independent claims 1 and 6, as amended. Dick does not cure the defects of Churchouse and Williams. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1 and 6, and claim 5 and 9, which depend therefrom, are not obvious over the proposed combination of Churchouse, Williams and Dick.

For at least the above reasons, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 5 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Churchouse and Williams in view of Dick.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited. If the Examiner believes that anything further is desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below to schedule a personal or telephone interview to discuss any remaining issues.

In the event that this paper is not being timely filed, the Applicant respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Any fees for such an extension, together with any additional fees that may be due with respect to this paper, may be charged to Counsel's Deposit Account Number 01-2300, referencing Docket Number 107348-00587.

Respectfully submitted,



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